

Atty. Dkt. No. 200310932-1

REMARKS

This Reply is in response to the Office Action mailed on February 22, 2006. Reconsideration and allowance of the application in view of the following is requested.

I. Claim Rejections

Paragraph 3 of the Office Action rejected claims 1-5, 17-18, 40-44, 50, and 59 as being anticipated by European Patent Application EP1329322.

With this Reply, Applicants are filing a declaration under 37 C.F.R. § 1.131, establishing the invention of the subject matter of Claims 1-5, 17-18, 40-44, 50, and 59 prior to July 23, 2003, the publication date of European Patent Application EP1329322. Hence, Applicants submit that, in view of the attached declaration, European Patent Application EP1329322 is not an effective reference against these claims and that these claims are, therefore, allowable. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that these rejections be withdrawn.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Paragraph 4 of the Office Action allows claims 19-39 and 51-55.

Paragraph 5 of the Office Action objects to claims 6-16 and 45-49 as being dependent upon a rejected base claim. Applicants submit that the base claims from which these claims depend are allowable for at least the reason set forth above. Withdrawal of these objections is requested.

III. Conclusion.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 08-2025. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 08-2025. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicants hereby petition for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 08-2025.

Respectfully submitted,

Date

14 April 2006

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